

# Exciter

Raleigh Amateur Radio Society



Worldwide Friendship

November 1999 Number 349

## 22 Students Enrolled in RARS Fall Tech License Class



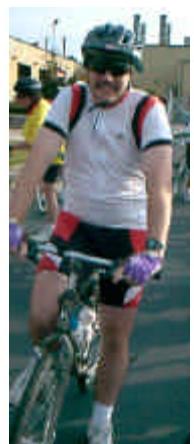
Mike WA4BPJ demonstrates series and parallel circuits



## RARS Auction at November Meeting

Time again to dust off those old radios, accessories, parts and "junque" that have been accumulating in the corner of the shack and see if you can get someone else to store it for awhile - and pay you for the privilege! Yes, it's the annual RARS Auction, at the November meeting (November 2nd, the usual 1st Tuesday). Jack WØUCE will once again wield the gavel, keeping things moving and interesting, and helping you get top dollar - or at least top laughs - for your prized sale items.

The rules are pretty simple. Items must be more or less ham radio related, including radios, accessories, parts, antennas, circuit boards, etc. Computers and related items are fair game, too. We're pretty liberal on what is and isn't "ham radio related," but don't push it too far!



Jeff AC4ZO rides  
105 miles in  
shortened MS-150



Don W9VAK and Jack WØUCE man the communications room at the Red Cross First Aid Station at the State Fair

Lots more pictures on the web:  
<http://www.rars.org>

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## *Exciter Publishing Information*

*Gary Pearce KN4AQ, Interim Editor*

The *Exciter* is published monthly by the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society and is available to its members at no cost. Letters to the Editor, technical articles, amateur radio community items of interest, and guest editorials are always welcome.

Articles published in *Exciter* do not officially represent the views of or endorsement by the society. Articles are printed at the discretion of the Editor; no article will be published unless it is accompanied by the article submitter. Articles can be hand-written, typed, or submitted electronically as rich text, and may be sent directly to the Editor.

Amateur radio-related items for sale by members of the society may be advertised without charge for one issue, but may be resubmitted as often as desired. Only non-commercial classified advertising will be printed with no charge.

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Contributions, inquiries and comments concerning *Exciter* content, advertising, distribution, and policies should be directed to the *Exciter* Editor.

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## *President's Corner*

*Gary KN4AQ*

It's been a busy fall for public service. ARES Communications for two hurricanes, The MS-150 and Red Cross communications at the Fair were huge events, and hams helped with several smaller events as well. *Thanks to all who helped.*

Are we getting overextended? Perhaps. We've had to turn down some worthy organizations this year, for lack of available ham volunteers. Some of these folks asked us too late (some just days before their event was scheduled). It takes time to get some volunteers lined up. But some calls for volunteers have gone unanswered by anyone. Why?

Some of us really love public service communications, but we like other, non-ham activities, too. Look at the calendar of public-service events in the spring and fall, and you'll see that you could spend most of the good-weather weekends working them. And that doesn't consider an ARES activation. That's too much to ask.

We don't have enough volunteer operators to cover it all, yet each year someone new hears what we can do and puts in a request. The choice is simple - get more volunteers, or say "no."

## *Tarheel Scanner/SWL SIG Report*

*Kelly AE4FG*

**Meeting change for November:** The November 15th meeting will begin at the dispatch center for the Raleigh traffic reports. Marshall Sherard will be conducting a tour of this facility starting at 6:00. Contact Bob Zeher at 844-9757, or watch for the meeting announcement in triangle.radio for more information. After the tour, we will meet at El Rodeo restaurant at 7:00 for dinner and the meeting.

**Meeting date change for December:** The December meeting will be held on the 13th (second Tuesday) instead of the 20th. This will be our annual magazine swap and junk box giveaway. Everyone is welcome. You don't need to be an amateur radio operator to attend, so bring your monitoring experiences and questions to share with the group.

*continued on page 3*

## *Tarheel Scanner/SWL SIG Report (continued from page 2)*

The October meeting of the Scanner/SWL SIG was held on the 18th at the El Rodeo restaurant on Pleasant Valley Road in Raleigh. Marshall Sherard, KE4ZNR, gave a presentation about the Raleigh area traffic reporters. They can be heard on 450.5875 each week day during the morning and afternoon commuting hours.

Rich Wells, N2MCA, brought in several hand held scanner radios and two computer controlled radios to demo to the group. Rich discussed the features of the radios, and both he and Marshall answered several questions from the group. See Rich's excellent web site at <http://www.strongsignals.net>.

There were 10 people attending the meeting, and the meeting broke up about 10:00 PM.

For more information, e-mail Bob Zeher ([ke4jvy@juno.com](mailto:ke4jvy@juno.com)) or Kelly Mills ([ae4fg@hotmail.com](mailto:ae4fg@hotmail.com)), or call Bob at 844-9757.

## *Nominating Committee Presents Slate of Officers*

The RARS Nominating committee, headed by Chuck K4HF, presents the following slate of officers and board members for the next year. Vice-President and Treasurer will begin the second year of their 2-year terms. Nominations will be accepted from the floor, and the election will take place at the November RARS meeting.

### *Officers for 2 year terms:*

President: Jack Ritter, W0UCE  
Secretary: Jeff Wittich, AC4ZO

### *Board Members for 1 year terms:*

Public Service Chair: Matt Sickles, W2BYV  
Education Director: Lynn Pitegoff, KO4QH  
Field Day Chair: Bill Pond, N0WP  
RARS Hamfest 2000 Chair: Cyndi Pearce, KD4ACW  
Exciter Editor: Gary Pearce, KN4AQ  
FM Repeater Chair: Fred Decker, N4IXL  
RARS Membership Chair: Denyse Walter, KG4CXR  
RARS Net Manager: Bill Cole, KG4CXY  
RARS Web Master: Cliff Broughton, KF4RDP  
At-Large Director: Wilbur Goss, WD4RDT  
At-Large Director: Alan Pitegoff, AB4OZ  
At-Large Director: John Jaskolka, N4YRD  
ARRL Liaison: Chuck Littlewood, K4HF  
W4DW, W4RNC Trustee: Jeff Wittich, AC4ZO

### *Committee Chairmen:*

RARS Volunteer Exam Coordinator: Charlie Brown, W4VFJ  
RARS Librarian: Wes Miller, KG4CXT

*Don't get confused and try to vote for the club officers at the Polling Place in the Dining Room.*

*Remember, RARS is meeting on the third floor in November, while the Wake County Board of Elections uses the church for the general election. Our somewhat less formal election will take place in the club meeting*

## **KG4CXY Appointed Net Manager**

Congratulations and thanks to Bill Cole KG4CXY. The RARS Board appointed Bill as Net Manager at the August Board meeting. Bill will be in charge of the Net Control Operators for the 8:00 Nightly Net, and will oversee all other nets on the RARS repeaters.

Bill is a new ham, but he comes to us with lots of experience in military communications. In responding to our call for a net manager, Bill said he was looking for a way to provide service to RARS, and he felt that this position called to him. Bill has been working with Jeff AC4ZO and Dick KD4ISC and has come quickly up to speed on the finer points of net procedure. You can e-mail him at bcole@jmpstart.com.

And thanks to Cliff Broughton KF4RDP, for filling in as "interim" net manager. Cliff picked up that job, along with Hamfest Security and the RARS Web page, earlier this year. As he occasionally had to remind us, his Net Manager position was supposed to be temporary!

## **RARS Combines Trader Net and Tech Net on Saturday Night**

The RARS Trader Net and Technical Net have been combined into one big event on Saturday nights at 8:30, hosted by Alan Pitegoff AB4OZ. By combining the nets, we're hoping to draw a bigger crowd to the new 146.64 repeater. Alan says he thinks that there is a lot of overlap in the groups of hams that would be interested in each net. Certainly the Trader's Nets of past years carried plenty of technical discussion. And the combined nets over the past few weeks seem to have pleased the hams that checked in.

So keep your radio on 146.64 Saturday nights at 8:30!

## **Auction at November Meeting (continued from page 1)**

**Meeting Starts Early.** All sellers and bidders must register before the auction, so come early. We'll try to get the room open by 6:00 p.m. Register your items and place them on the table. Bidders register and get a bidder number - all bidding will be by bidder number. We'll start the regular club meeting early, at 7:00 p.m., and get to the auction as quickly as possible.

What sells best? Past experience shows that inexpensive items sell best - parts and accessories. Low end "bargain" radios can sell well. More expensive pieces, and pure junk, don't tend to sell well, but there are always exceptions. Buyers should take the time to look over the equipment tables and ask questions before the

auction begins. There isn't time to give you an equipment review during the auction itself.

The November meeting will be held on the third floor of the Forest Hills Church - same room the October meeting occupied. The dining room is again being used by the Board of Elections as a polling place. RARS members should park in the Clark Ave. lot first to avoid mixing with election traffic in the Dixie Trail lot. You can use the stairs or elevator to reach the third floor (marked "2" on the elevator buttons).

**No Cut for RARS.** This year, RARS will not be taking a percentage of your sales - you keep it all!

## **RARS 10 Meter Net Small But Steady**

The RARS 10 Meter net, now meeting Wednesdays at 8:30 on 28.364 MHz, has been small, but there are at least a few check-ins each week. Well, a couple of weeks ago, NCS KN4AQ had no local check-ins, but ended up in a half-hour rag-chew with a station in Suriname. You should'a been there. If you have an HF station, mark the net on your calendar and meet some RARS members you hardly ever talk to on the air! And to keep the net going, volunteer to take Net Control when you can.

## *Local Service for Broken Radios*

*Gary KN4AQ*

Got a broken rig? Getting service can be difficult, especially for older rigs that are no longer manufactured.

There's a local solution for those with broken HF rigs. RARS received a letter from Larry Tucker N4KVP, President of Sandhills Technical Service, in Candor, NC. Larry says STS has been

in business for several years. They offer three- to four-week turnaround, with shop rates of \$35/hour. They can service most brands of HF equipment "from Atlas to Yaesu," including Heathkit if you have a manual. They'll even work on your homebrew stuff if you have good documentation.

Unfortunately, they don't

work on HT's, but they will do limited work on 2-meter FM mobile rigs. They'll also give you some free advice if you're stuck on a problem working on your own rig.

Check their web page:  
[www.janrix.com/sts](http://www.janrix.com/sts).

E-mail [sts@ac.net](mailto:sts@ac.net) or phone 910.974.7867.

## *Dxing, Anyone?*

*Herb KF4NGR*

For some odd reason our President Mr. Pearce asked me to write an article for the *Exciter* about DXing. He seems to think there is a story here. I am a relatively new ham and there are many who are more experienced at DXing than myself. The fact that I have swamped the club with QSL cards for the outgoing bureau might have something to do with it.

At any rate, I feel privileged to write an article in the *Exciter* about DXing. While I enjoy all facets of ham radio HF, VHF, and UHF, I will address only DXing in this article.

I have always had an interest in this hobby, so in 1996 when I read an article in the paper about Field Day, I called Gary and he pointed me in the right direction. I attended the next RARS class and received my Tech Plus ham license. I was on my way!

DXing reminds me of golf. You make that first good shot - you're hooked. You make that first DX contact - you're hooked. Another comparison I make is with fishing. You sit down at the rig and you never know what country you might find. You throw out your call and it comes back to you from

another part of the world. You've made the contact. Sometimes it's with a familiar prefix, like that of Germany, or Brazil, but sometimes the prefix is not familiar. The drama increases as you reach for the Countries list, and sure enough, there it is! You've worked another new country.

The big majority of my contacts are on CW. CW holds a special fascination with me. I have tried to pin down what it is. Maybe it's hearing that weak signal with your unmistakable call sign, or maybe it's being a part of a group of hams who like CW and take pride in their learned skills and proficiency.

My philosophy regarding CW is "Get your Tech Plus. Get on the air, and the rest is history." I know of no other way to meet friends and talk to the world at such a low cost.

I would like to thank my fellow hams for the help they have given me putting up antennas, lending me equipment, and answering stupid questions. Well, got to go fill out some QSL cards.

CUL. GUD DX ES 73.

## *Minutes of the October RARS Meeting - Oct. 5, 1999*

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The regular meeting of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society was held on October 5, 1999 at the Forest Hills Baptist Church on Clark Avenue.

The meeting was called to order at 7:33p by President Gary Pearce, KN4AQ. David N4YTO gave the treasurers report. He said that RARS membership is 246. Gary KN4AQ read the report from the Nominating Committee. Voting for the year 2000 Officers and Board members will take place at the November meeting. Fred N4IXL reported on the FM Committee. He said that the phone line is being installed at the Bayleaf site, and that .64 continues to run smoothly. Jeff AC4ZO announced that the fall classes are underway, with about 19 students. He noted that support by club members has been very good. Jack WØUCE said a few words about the upcoming auction, and what would be required to make it successful. Reed AB4W announced that the owner of a blue Cherokee in the parking lot has left the lights on.

At this point, Barry Shafer from the American Red Cross addressed the membership. He said a few words about the Red cross, and specifically what they will be doing at the State Fair. He passed around a sign-up sheet for radio

volunteers. Also on the topic of Public Service, Gary announced the MS-150 bike ride coming up on October 9. Help is still needed and a sign-up sheet for that was also circulated.

Reed Whitten, AB4W, the North Carolina Section Manager was introduced. Reed commented on the ham radio involvement during the recent hurricane Floyd event and thanked all who participated.

President Pearce then introduced John Covington, W4CC, a candidate for Section Manager for the next term. John spoke about his current appointment as Affiliated Club Coordinator, and also about his candidacy for Section Manager.

The guest speaker for the evening was introduced: Terry Rogers, WA4BVY, whose program topic was "A Romp Through Digital Radio."

Door prizes went to KE4PAX, and KG4CXT. The meeting adjourned at 9:51p.

Jeff Wittich, AC4ZO, Secretary

## *Minutes of the September Board Meeting - Sept 21, 1999*

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The monthly Board meeting of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society was held at the Forest Hills Baptist Church on September 21. The meeting was called to order by Vice President KF4RTX at 7:36 in the absence of KN4AQ. Members present at that time were: K4HF, AB4OZ, KO4QH, KF4RDP, KF4RTX, KC4UPX, and AC4ZO.

KF4RTX gave the VP report. He said that the program for the October meeting will be about digital radio, and that the November meeting will once again be the annual auction. KC4UPX gave the FM Committee report. He reported that .64 went off the air during the recent weather event due to generator problems. Also, the Bayleaf site is having power problems. It seems a landscaper has cut the power feed to the building. The tower work is now complete, and .525 has been on the air for testing from a low antenna.

KO4QH reported on the Education Department. She said that "Now You're Talking" is being put on audio tape for visually impaired persons. AC4ZO announced the Fall classes to begin on October 4. He said that registration is very low. Reporting for Public Service was KC4UPX. He stated that lots of help would be needed for the ten days of the NC State Fair. KG4CXR, Denyse, reported on Membership Services. She said that things went well at the August meeting, and then brought up the idea of membership cards. The discussion of this item was moved to "New Business." K4HF reported for the Hamfest Committee. He said that a kickoff meeting is scheduled for

7:00p on Monday, September 27 at KD4ACW. K4HF gave the Nominating Committee report, which is included elsewhere in this Exciter:

### ***Unfinished Business:***

KC4UPX brought up the issue of the tax status initiative. He said that all of our paperwork is filed, and we are waiting for a reply from the IRS.

### ***New Business:***

A item concerning the annual auction was heard. A motion was made by K4HF, seconded by AC4ZO that we eliminate the 10% club fee for auction items at the November auction. The motion was carried.

The issue of membership cards for the Club came up. There was a discussion, and lots of ideas were heard. Motions were made and withdrawn, finally, the Board asked KG4CXR to report on the propriety of the issue at the October Board meeting.

KC4UPX illuminated the need for a policy to control the acquisition of donated assets to the club. The item will be put on the October agenda.

On motion by AC4ZO seconded by KF4RDP, the meeting adjourned at 9:21p.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Wittich, AC4ZO - Secretary

## **IRS Grants RARS 501(c)(3) Tax Status**

The Internal Revenue Service has granted RARS' application to become a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit corporation. Thanks go to Fred N4IXL, and our Treasurer, David N4YTO, for getting the application submitted. This means that in the future, RARS will be able to accept tax-deductible contributions of cash and equipment. For the moment (and for the auction), we are only in a

position to accept CASH donations. Anyone wishing to make a donation based on a piece of equipment to be sold at the auction should sell the item themselves, then donate the proceeds to the club. See David Fix N4YTO, our treasurer, to set up a donation.

Club DUES are *NOT* deductible, but donations above that amount are.

### **Sprucing up the Shack**

A few months ago, I told about how those old boxes of QSL cards could be put to use collecting various awards to liven up the walls of your shack.. I focused on the Ten American Districts award and the Great Lakes Award, both of which can be obtained if you have Worked All States.

This month, I'll tell you about a nice certificate that can be earned with only 3 cards: The Diamond State Award. This award is earned by contacting and confirming stations in each of

*Jeff AC4ZO*

Deleware's 3 counties. There is no date limitation, but unfortunately, with this one, the actual cards have to be sent in. I don't generally like sending my cards anywhere, but I've never actually heard anyone say they did not get their cards back after sending them to any award manager. I don't think it's a big problem.

To apply, send your cards and \$2 to D. Hart KE3WH, 6 Harpers Place, Bear, DE 19701.

### **Repeater Update: 224.64, 444.525 On Air Soon**

The RARS "Bayleaf" repeaters - 224.64 and 444.525 Mhz, should be on the air soon, perhaps by the time you read this *Exciter*. These repeaters, along with 146.64, went off the air when the tower supporting their antennas was taken down to make way for the North Wake Expressway, now under construction. A guy wire support was smack in the right-of-way.

Alltel (formerly Sprint Celular/360) bought the old

tower site from Time-Warner Cablevision, and erected a new, self-supporting tower at the same location. They graciously permitted RARS to mount antennas at the top of the new tower. We had to build a building to house the repeaters. That building, and our antennas and feedlines, are all in place. Power has just been hooked up, and we're ready to go. The 224.64 machine is carrier access, while 444.525 uses 88.5 Hz PL.



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Visit the RARS Web site at <http://www.rars.org>.

## *RARS Joins Hams and Scouts Worldwide for JOTA*



Jeff AC4ZO, Jay KM4EP and Greg W4IK set up stations at the Elk's Lodge in Raleigh, and treated about 50 Boy and Girl Scouts to a Field Day style Amateur Radio operation. The Scouts talked locally on the area repeaters (autopatches home were popular) and to other Scouts around the country. International contacts were limited by restrictions on 3rd party operation - the Scouts couldn't talk to many DX stations, but lots of DX contacts were made. The most popular Scout-to-Scout topic of conversation? *Pokemon!*